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ABSTRACT

Designed as a guide for adults who wish to lead a group of 10- to 13-year-olds through a series of discoveries about preschoolers and how they grow, activity materials are presented concerning physical, intellectual, and social development (Section 1); and children's feelings (Section 2). Specifically, Section 1 discuss children's developing awareness of the body, understanding of the world, and relationships with family members and other people. Units of Section 2 describe the feelings of a young child in general, a child's feelings about self, and a child's feelings about others. Each of the units includes (1) introductory statements presenting the principal ideas in each unit; (2) selected topics for group discussion; (3) suggested activities building on the discussions; and (4) brief descriptions of mini-projects preteens can implement among preschoolers. A section on resource material describes ways children learn, ways of facilitating language acquisition, finger plays and action rhymes, concept and language activities, and includes guidelines about reading books and telling stories to young children. A guide to understanding children's feelings offers examples of gambits that invite conversation, as well as brief descriptions of aspects of effective listening and strategies for coping with feelings. Observation sheets and an individualized contract for program participants are provided. (RH)

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WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

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WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

Written by members of the Northeast 4-H Family Life/Personal Development Committee: Jennifer Birckmayer, human development and family studies senior Extension associate, Cornell University; Mary Ann Finch, state leader, home economics, University of Delaware; Mary Jo Herde, human development specialist, University of New Hampshire; Warren Schumacher, human development specialist, University of Massachusetts; and Paul Nuttall, human relations specialist and committee chairperson, The University of Connecticut.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

Introductory Comments For Group Leaders

What Are Children Like? is designed as a guide for adults who wish to lead a group of 10- to 13-year-olds, referred to in this guide as "preteens", through some fascinating discoveries about preschoolers and how they grow. As part of the discovery process, it is hoped that both you, the leader, and the preteens will gain deeper awareness of yourselves as unique and special human beings. Any person with the following qualifications should be able to lead a group through this enjoyable experience.

1. Genuine interest in children of all ages.
2. Ability to communicate informally with preteens and a willingness to keep trying to communicate with them.
3. A sense that it will be fun to learn more about human growth and development, and that this kind of learning is important.

As leader, you are not expected to have special training or expertise in the area of child development, although, of course, any knowledge of child development will certainly be an asset.

The project is divided into two major sections: Section One "A Child Grows" and Section Two "A Child Feels."

Section One has three units:

- Unit I Developing An Awareness of the Body (physical)
- Unit II Developing An Understanding of the World (intellectual)
- Unit III Developing Relationships with Family Members and Other People (social)

Section Two has three units:

- Unit I Feelings of A Young Child
- Unit II A Young Child's Feelings About Self
- Unit III A Child's Feelings About Others

Each of these units is organized as follows:

INTRODUCTORY STATEMENTS present the principal ideas the preteens will study in each unit. You should understand these ideas before you meet with the preteens. If you wish to learn more about these ideas, you will find a bibliography at the end of this booklet.

TALK ABOUT IT presents subjects you and the preteens may discuss in a group meeting. To get the most out of these discussions, preteens must be actively involved. Become familiar with the content of each TALK ABOUT IT so you can lead lively discussions. Also, use any special knowledge of your preteen group to modify or adapt the material when necessary. If the discussion drags, or if the preteens seem bored or restless, move on to DO IT. Often you can incorporate concepts from TALK ABOUT IT into the DO IT portion. Flexibility is the key to having fun at these

meetings.

DO IT is designed to move the ideas from the familiar group setting of the meeting to the activity level. If preteens are really going to be "grabbed" by these ideas, they need to try them out by actively *doing* something with these ideas.

EXPERIENCES TO SHARE are mini-projects for each preteen to enjoy with a preschool child prior to the next meeting. Each preteen can then share his or her experiences with you and the other members of the group during the first part of the next meeting. Again, you should attempt to match the "experience to share" with each preteen's abilities and interests. *No preteen should feel pressured to cover all the material or to do all the suggested activities.*

If the preteens are more "turned on" by one topic, such as physical development of young children, spend more time on that topic than the others. Or, if they seem to prefer talking about emotional growth, it's okay to begin there and perhaps go on later to the other three topics.

Remember, too, that, although it is convenient to talk about four major components of human development, human beings themselves are not easily divided into four parts. Often we cannot discuss a child's physical growth without discussing accompanying intellectual growth. We all know how a young person's physical size, stature, and health affect his social relationships. We look for an integration of physical, intellectual, social and emotional development that will enable each child to exist as a competent, healthy individual.

Throughout this project, an important goal is helping preteens and preschoolers feel "okay" about themselves. The belief that *one is as one perceives oneself to be* reflects the convictions of the people who developed this material. We hope that you and the preteens you work with will develop a sense of the mystery, joy, and excitement that comes from discovering what young children are like.

Individualized Contract

Name of club member .....
Name of club leader .....
Name of preschooler with whom
club member will be having fun .....

Areas of Focus

Cover the following areas: (check)

Section One - A Child Grows	Proposed	Completed
Unit I - Developing An Awareness of the Body (physical)	_____	_____
Unit II - Developing An Understanding of the World (intellectual)	_____	_____
Unit III - Developing Relationships with Family Members and Other People (social)	_____	_____
Section Two - A Child Feels		
Unit I - Feelings of a Young Child	_____	_____
Unit II - A Young Child's Feelings About Self	_____	_____
Unit III - Children's Feelings About Others	_____	_____

Responsibilities:

A. *Essential*
1. I will spend approximately _____ minutes with this preschooler on activity area. (Minimum 15-20 minutes).
2. I will try to attend as many club meetings as I can (the sharing of ideas and experiences with the group is very important).

B. *Optional*
1. Keep record-observation charts.
2. Talk with the preschooler's parents about what I learn.
3. Offer to talk to my class in school about what I learn.
4.
5.

Activity Material For Group Leaders

Section One: A CHILD GROWS

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WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION ONE:
A CHILD GROWS

UNIT I

Developing an Awareness of the Body (Physical)

Unit I
Developing an Awareness of the Body (Physical)

General Introduction

One of the most evident characteristics of young children's growth is the rapid increase in size. Never again will they grow so quickly as during the first four years. Equally important, though less noticeable, are the discoveries young children make about their growing bodies. This unit is designed to help you encourage preteens to develop an awareness of and good feelings about their own bodies.

Have you ever wondered how children become aware of themselves and of their bodies? Awareness comes about gradually; but from birth infants have the sensations of movement and control of their bodies. Next comes a distinct awareness of parts of the body and their functions and, finally, the realization that their bodies belong to them in a special way. Their bodies contribute to the infants' awareness of themselves as special people. This section is designed to introduce preteens to the growing awareness young children have of their bodies and of themselves.

Talk About It

There's one word that's special to each of us: our *name*. Just as a name makes each of us feel special, our feelings about our bodies can make us feel special, too.

How do children first become aware of their bodies as being theirs? Of their color? Of their sex? How do they come to feel about the appearance and size of their bodies? Discuss children with different body sizes and appearances or physical handicaps. Can they feel proud of their bodies? What experiences might prevent them from accepting their bodies as they are? Give the preteens a chance to brainstorm over these ideas. Then help them discuss some differences in their views.

How do people develop pride that they are boys or girls?

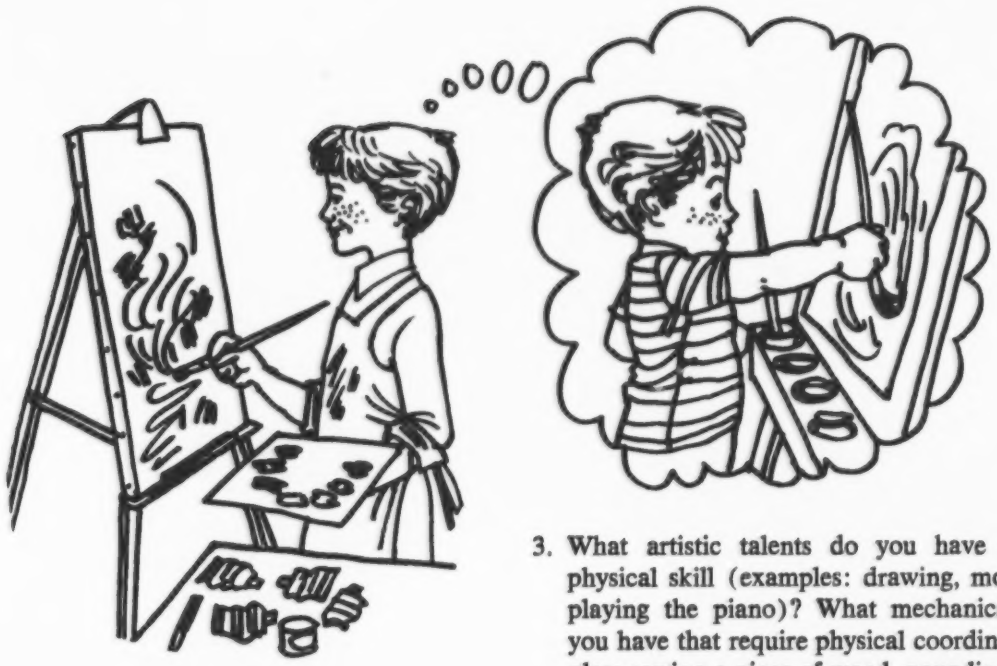
How do people develop feelings of pride in their skin color?

And what experiences prevent them from feeling proud of who and what they are? Do any of these experiences cause young boys and girls to act differently toward others of the opposite sex or dissimilar racial or ethnic backgrounds?

Let's look at some ways children become aware of their bodies as their *selves*.

Do It

One experience that makes us feel proud of ourselves is learning that we can do new things with our bodies. Perhaps we did not realize we had a particular ability. Let's try to think of some things we've discovered we can do that make us feel good about



ourselves.

1. How did you feel, the first time you were able to ride a bike, glide across the ice on skates, or hit a baseball? What other things can you remember doing for the first time that made you feel in control of yourself or gave you a sense of accomplishment?
2. You might want to try an activity with your group that lets the preteens feel their bodies in motion. After the experience, they may want to discuss how they felt while doing the activity. Here are a few possible motion activities.

   Statues: Put a record on and let the children move any way they want. When you stop the music, the children are to stop and hold their positions. Start the music again, the children move again, and so on.

   Scarf Dancing: Give the children scarves and turn on a record. Have the children dance and move their scarves in time with the music.

   Let's Play Animal: Name an animal, or let the children name favorite animals. Then ask the children to move and make sounds like the animals they mentioned. An elephant, for example, has a trunk and tail and moves slowly.

   Think up your own game.

Use the following questions to stimulate discussion:

3. What artistic talents do you have that require physical skill (examples: drawing, modelling clay, playing the piano)? What mechanical talents do you have that require physical coordination (examples: sawing a piece of wood, pounding a nail without bending it, sewing on a machine)? What abilities did you need to have to accomplish these tasks? Trace these abilities back to the first time you did them or began to master them.
4. What do each of you (the preteens) do each day to care for your bodies (exercise, eat well, sleep, relax, etc.)? Which of these are most important to little children?
5. Pretend that you are to meet someone at the airport or train station. How would you describe yourself to someone so that they could find you? Ask other group members whether they would recognize you from your description.

Experiences To Share

(Note to leader: The following will give preteens a chance to explore how preschoolers gradually become aware of their bodies. Have each preteen play with a preschooler.)

1. While you are with preschoolers, notice the way they handle toys, silverware and other objects. Do the preschoolers seem to enjoy repeating some actions over and over again? Does it seem like they are practicing a newly discovered skill?

Observation Sheet

CHECK THE UNIT FOCUSED ON DURING OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION SESSION

SECTION ONE - A CHILD GROWS

____UNIT I - DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS OF THE BODY

____UNIT II - DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

____UNIT III - DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS & OTHER PEOPLE

SECTION TWO - A CHILD FEELS

____UNIT I - FEELINGS OF A YOUNG CHILD

____UNIT II - A YOUNG CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT SELF

____UNIT III - CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT OTHERS

CHECK ONE: DURING THE SESSION, THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED ALONE____
THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED WITH OTHER CHILDREN____
THE PRESCHOOLER WAS INVOLVED WITH ME____
THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED WITH AN ADULT____

WHILE I WAS WITH THE PRESCHOOLER

a) BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENED:

b) CHECK ONE: THE ACTIVITY WITH THE PRESCHOOLER WAS

____VERY GOOD
____OK - GOOD
____? DON'T KNOW ?
____NOT SO GOOD
____VERY BAD

c) CHECK ONE: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRESCHOOLER THOUGHT THE ACTIVITY WAS

____VERY GOOD
____OK - GOOD
____? DON'T KNOW ?
____NOT OK - BAD
____LOUSY

d) CHECK ONE: I LEARNED

____A GREAT DEAL
____SOME THINGS
____DON'T KNOW - CONFUSED
____VERY LITTLE
____ABSOLUTELY NOTHING

If you checked either "A GREAT DEAL" or "SOME THINGS" above, try to list briefly one or two things you learned about a preschooler.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION ONE:
A CHILD GROWS

UNIT II

Developing an Understanding of The World (Intellectual)

UNIT II
Developing an Understanding of The World (Intellectual)

Learning begins the moment an infant is born. Children learn as naturally as they breathe. They learn by imitating other people, by repeating actions over and over, and by using their senses. Just as an infant may need help to begin breathing, so may young children need help in learning all they can about the world in which they live.

Watching a young child learn is like watching a flower open or a rainbow appear. To see the awakening of learning in a child is fun, exciting, and rewarding.

In a child's world there is so much to learn. We watch a newborn baby kick, yawn, and blink. What a difference there is between the baby and an older brother or sister who hits a ball and runs to first base!

Learning involves the child in many activities. Picking up a glass of milk, catching a ball, buttoning a shirt, or understanding 2 + 2 are all important learnings. In each of these learnings, a change occurs in the child. Providing training and experience at suitable times and in appropriate ways is the task of those who work and play with children.

Children learn by using their senses, muscles, curiosity, and language. They learn by exploring, by trial and error, through feeling pleasure and pain. They also learn from others around them by imitation, participation, and communication.

Talk About It

To learn about the world, children need many different kinds of experiences. They need to touch, taste, smell, hear, and see many different kinds of objects. Gradually, children discover differences in size, shape, color, weight, density, and quantity. We help them by giving them words to talk about their discoveries and by pointing out interesting things for them to investigate. For instance, we say, "That *red* block is heavy," or "That song you just sang sounded like a *happy* song." Above all, we help children learn by encouraging them to be curious. We want children to explore, try new ideas, and ask questions.

Children learn best by making discoveries and by having people who are important to them react to their discoveries in an enthusiastic way. We use our senses to learn about objects and people around us. Can you remember learning about a new food? Which of your senses was involved? Some people want to touch or smell unfamiliar food before tasting it.

One way children learn is by being curious and exploring. They poke, peer, push and pull at things around them. That's their way of finding out about the world. They ask "why" thousands of times. They will try to take almost anything apart and occasionally try to put it together again. They try, fail, succeed and try again. And learn something with every experience. Their experimentation with language is part of being curious.

Let's look at some ways a preschooler thinks.

First, young children are self-centered. They see the world from their own point of view. They have little objectivity, for they are too young to understand how another person may think or feel. It is especially hard for preschoolers to understand how another person can see the same thing differently from the way

they see it.

Second, young children are greatly influenced by what they see and hear. They genuinely believe that what they see is *real*. What they see and hear now is more important than what happened yesterday. *Seeing is believing!*

Third, preschoolers are relatively unsocial. They usually feel no need to justify their conclusions to anyone. If asked, they may be unable to explain to you the reasons for their beliefs or views. They sometimes pay little or no attention to what others think. It's important not to expect young children to behave unselfishly. In fact, we can expect them to act in ways that seem quite selfish to us. We must realize that during the first few years of life people grow gradually in their ability to see things from another person's point of view.

Fourth, preschoolers gradually come to know:

- Familiar objects
- People
- Time
- Trust in their world
- Realistic fear
- Their own bodies
- Responsibility
- How to handle anger
- How to cope with frustration

Do It

(Note to leader: Try one or two of these activities with your preteens at the meeting.)

1. Make a *feel* box. Take an old shoe box. Cut a hole in the lid large enough to slip your hand inside. Put things inside the box that are hard/soft, rough/smooth, large/small, etc. Pretend you are young children. Reach inside and—by feeling only—describe the objects in the box.
2. Bring in a fresh pineapple, mango, coconut, or other unusual fruit. Cut the fruit and let the group members taste, smell, and feel it. Then ask the following questions: Why did some like and others dislike the taste? Have you tasted or smelled anything like it before? What did it feel like? Let them enjoy the new learning experience just as a preschooler might when learning something new. What kinds of questions do they think preschoolers might ask when they experience this fruit for the first time?
3. Try this blindfold test. Blindfold several group members and give them each different kinds of fruit (an apple, pear, peach, banana, for example). Have them describe aloud what they are tasting without telling the fruit's name. Do not let the rest of the members of the group see the fruit. From the description have the members try to guess what fruit the person is eating.
4. Take a trip to a day care center, a Head Start center, nursery school, day care home, or Sunday school class to watch children at play. Observe the play activities carefully. What is the purpose of each activity? What does the adult do to help the children have a good learning experience? What

supplies are provided for the children to help them learn? Invite a preschool teacher to come to your next meeting. Ask the teacher to discuss what she or he has seen or experienced with young children.

5. Talk with a preschooler's parents. Can the parents describe what the preschooler is learning? What do the parents do to help their child learn? What "fun" things have parents seen their children do while learning?

Experiences To Share

Between now and the next meeting, try one of these activities. Share your experience at the next meeting.

1. Make a "feel" box for a preschooler similar to the one made at the meeting. (See #1 under DO IT). Play the game with the preschooler. Was it hard for the child to describe the object in the box? Did the child want to take the top off to see what was inside? Did the child have the vocabulary to explain what was inside the box? Help the child have fun and feel good even if she/he cannot describe the object.
2. Show a preschooler a piece of fruit (apple, orange, banana). What questions does the preschooler ask about the fruit? If the fruit is unfamiliar, how does the child decide whether or not to eat it? What kinds of things can you talk about with the preschooler (color, shape, sounds, does it have seeds, juice)?
3. Take a walk with a preschooler. Talk about what you see and hear. Are there any unusual smells in the air? What about unusual sounds? Whom did you meet on your walk?
4. Put a puzzle together with a young child. Was it too hard or too easy? What kinds of help did the preschooler need to complete the task? If you were to do the activity again, what would you do differently?
5. From your old toys, or a neighbor's toys, select a toy that teaches something or that is labelled "educational." Do you think it is educational? What does it teach? Try playing with the preschooler. Is the toy appropriate for the child's age? What could you do to help a child enjoy this toy more?

Observation Sheet

CHECK THE UNIT FOCUSED ON DURING OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION SESSION

SECTION ONE - A CHILD GROWS

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____NOT SO GOOD
____VERY BAD

c) CHECK ONE: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRESCHOOLER THOUGHT THE ACTIVITY WAS

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____NOT OK - BAD
____LOUSY

d) CHECK ONE: I LEARNED

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____SOME THINGS
____DON'T KNOW - CONFUSED
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____ABSOLUTELY NOTHING

If you checked either "A GREAT DEAL" or "SOME THINGS" above, try to list briefly one or two things you learned about a preschooler.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION ONE:
A CHILD GROWS

UNIT III

Developing Relationships With Family Members and Other People

UNIT III
Developing Relationships With Family Members and Other People

How often do we correct the English grammar of a child who says: "Me and Joey went . . ." to "Joey and I . . ."? But maybe "me and . . ." more accurately expresses how a child sees things—ME: I'M THE CENTER OF MY WORLD.

Nobody can exist completely alone, isolated from other people. As infants develop, their awareness of others grows—first the family . . . then other people. The other people in one's life help to form "my concept of ME"—"OK" or "NOT OK" . . . comfortable and proud of being me or dissatisfied with myself. How other people treat me tremendously influences my self-esteem and my sense of being able to cope with my world.

> "When the child feels comfortable and secure in both his home and his expanding community and when people important to him think well of him, the child develops a sense of value and self-esteem. He appreciates himself. And when his attempts at achievement are successful, when he experiences accomplishment and reward, the child feels that he can do new things and make changes in his world. He thus gains a feeling of personal control.
>
> Much of the child's development, especially his social development and behavior, between ages 3 and 6 is determined by two factors: his senses of self-esteem and personal control. If a child thinks he is important and good and able to control his actions, he will achieve and perform both for his own satisfaction and for those around him and will grow socially, emotionally, and mentally. If, however, a child has less experience with success and reward or is insecure, he may feel that events occur because of other more powerful people. The sense of his own potential ability and worth may never fully develop."[1]

Talk About It

Throughout history, stories have been told about human babies who have been lost very early in life and raised by animals—Romulus and Remus, the founders of Rome, reared by wolves; Jungle Boy, etc. Have you ever thought what it really would be like to "grow" a child without a human family?

—Could the child speak in any other way than through grunts and groans? Listen to how small children raised in the realistic setting of a family use language—all the words they know, how they communicate to others what they want and need!

—Without families, would children have any sense of what is acceptable and unacceptable to other people? Or would they just plod ahead and do many things that annoy and offend others?

—Without families, would children be able to accept the warmth of human love or would they feel smothered by it?

Even if a child is raised in a loving family, children under age 6 think more about themselves and their own needs than they do about other people. *Most* young children are not ready to share with others

1. Cohen-Brandegee. *Day Care #3: Serving Pre-school Children.* U.S. Department of Health, Education and Welfare, Office of Human Development, Office of Child Development. DHEW Publication No. (OHD) 74-1057.

or to see things from another's point of view until they are 6 or older. Remember, this is not a hard and fast rule—some children under age 6 will take turns using the same toy and seem to share quite well. It's important not to expect too much too soon; don't ask children to act in ways that are more grown up than they are.

Do It

Choose one or two activities that seem best for you and the group of 10- to 13-year-olds.

1. Let's try to think about all we have learned from our families that affects the way we treat one another. Can we list all the things we have learned? (Note to leader: Avoid overly directing your group—let them struggle a little over the task. If they don't say anything, perhaps you could stimulate discussion with such questions as: "Where did you learn how to speak to one another?" "Where did you learn about how to behave when you meet older people?")
   Remember that each family looks at behavior in different ways; it's not up to us to judge their behavior. But perhaps you may wish to help your preteens wonder about their own feelings as they consider their daily relationships.
2. Have the preteens list all the TV programs they watch that portray some family:
   —Try to identify the real and the unreal (the true to life or "only in the movies").
   —Do you like the way the members of the family treat one another?
   —In the program, how do the actions of the family members affect the children in the story?
3. Cut out pictures from magazines collected by the leader showing different kinds of relationships between adults and children or children with other children—pictures that show loving relationships . . . people angry at each other . . . people who are sad because they lost a member of the family, lost a ball game . . . a happy experience, etc. Have each member of the group pick out one picture from this collection and make up a story about one of the children in the picture. As part of the story, the preteen should try to describe how the child may feel:
   —Does the child feel like an important and valuable member of the family?
   —Does the child feel other people will listen and take what she/he says seriously?
4. From the following list choose the statements which might help a child feel like a respectable and important member of a family.
   a. "Let me carry the juice—you'll spill it because you're too little."
   b. "You did a good job of putting on your own boots."
   c. "Don't touch—you're so clumsy you'll break it."
   d. "I'd like you to help me make cookies."
   e. "Your room is a mess—you're such a little pig."
   f. "How did you put the toys away so quickly?"
   g. "That's just a little scratch—don't cry like a baby."
   h. "Shall we find a band aid—sometimes scratches really hurt."

   i. "Will you shut up? You're driving me crazy!"
   j. "Please find a book or a puzzle. We need a quiet house right now."
5. What are some confidence-building statements preteens can make to children in the following situations? (If the group is large enough, divide into subgroups—put each question on an index card—give a card to each group.)
   (1) Four-year-old Judy refuses to let four-year-old Billy play with her new truck.
   (2) Kenny (age 3) cries when Joan (age 3½)

tries to help him with his painting.

(3) Gretchen (age 3) tries to keep the band aid her father has asked her to bring for a scratch on her baby sister's knee.

"Focus on 'DO's' instead of 'DON'T's' "

If you listen to the ways that many of us guide children, you will find the words "don't'," "stop," and "quit" prefacing many commands to children. Telling children what *not* to do does not prepare them for what *to do*, or teach them how to handle a situation better. Translating the "don't's" into "do's" shows children a more acceptable behavior.

DON'Ts	Translated into DO's
Don't throw the ball	Roll the ball on the floor
Don't squeeze the kitten	Hold the kitty gently
Quit hitting	Talk to him—tell him what you want
Don't touch	Just look

It is important for children to develop feelings that they are capable and worthwhile. A "can do" feeling enables a child to try new things and to approach school and other life situations confidently. Belittling experiences destroy self-confidence.

Situation	Belittling	Constructive
Peter spills the garbage he's emptying.	Can't you ever do anything right?	That's a hard job—next time carry it this way and then it won't spill.
Johnny cries in frustration when something doesn't work right.	If you'd just listen to me, that wouldn't happen.	You need to do this first and then it will work.
Willie cries because he can't get a wagon wheel on his trike.	I told you it wouldn't work.	Let's see why it didn't work.

Experiences To Share

1. When the preteen is observing the preschooler doing something with other family members, ask the preteen to look and listen for statements or actions that help the child feel good or important.
   —Try to see whether the event made the child feel good about herself or himself.
   —In this situation did the preschooler get the idea that her or his ideas and feelings really mattered?
   —Suggest that the preteen ask the preschooler who in his or her family takes care of the children. Who does different jobs?
   —Make a collage of a family from pictures cut from magazines.
2. The preteen may schedule an informal visit with a young child (preferably with a child whom the preteen has previously observed). During this visit, the preteen and the young child can play together, either engaging in an activity the preteen has prepared and brought along (such as scrap materials to put together with paste into a design) or simply exploring together some of the young child's toys or activities readily available in the home. What helps the preteen relate more easily to the preschooler? What makes the preschooler more comfortable in relating to the preteen?

Observation Sheet

CHECK THE UNIT FOCUSED ON DURING OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION SESSION

SECTION ONE - A CHILD GROWS

____UNIT I - DEVELOPING AN AWARENESS OF THE BODY

____UNIT II - DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

____UNIT III - DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS & OTHER PEOPLE

SECTION TWO - A CHILD FEELS

____UNIT I - FEELINGS OF A YOUNG CHILD

____UNIT II - A YOUNG CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT SELF

____UNIT III - CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT OTHERS

CHECK ONE: DURING THE SESSION, THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED ALONE____
THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED WITH OTHER CHILDREN____
THE PRESCHOOLER WAS INVOLVED WITH ME____
THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED WITH AN ADULT____

WHILE I WAS WITH THE PRESCHOOLER

a) BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENED:

b) CHECK ONE: THE ACTIVITY WITH THE PRESCHOOLER WAS

____VERY GOOD
____OK - GOOD
____? DON'T KNOW ?
____NOT SO GOOD
____VERY BAD

c) CHECK ONE: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRESCHOOLER THOUGHT THE ACTIVITY WAS

____VERY GOOD
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____NOT OK - BAD
____LOUSY

d) CHECK ONE: I LEARNED

____A GREAT DEAL
____SOME THINGS
____DON'T KNOW - CONFUSED
____VERY LITTLE
____ABSOLUTELY NOTHING

If you checked either "A GREAT DEAL" or "SOME THINGS" above, try to list briefly one or two things you learned about a preschooler.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION TWO:
A CHILD FEELS

UNIT I
Feelings of a Young Child

General Introduction

From conception to age 6, children undergo fantastic growth—a growth in many ways unparalleled at any other time of life. As part of this growth, the development of feelings and moods is perhaps more overlooked than other changes. Yet, as preteens come to understand a young child's feelings they gain special access to their own emotional life as well as the inner life of the young child.

The young child's life is often spoken of as a "world of make believe," but it is far more than that. We are all beginning to learn about the lives of joy or tragedy young children lead and how intense their feelings and experiences can be.

This section will help you introduce preteens to understanding young children's feelings. Its purpose is to help preteens:

—become aware of the many feelings a young child has.
—explore a young child's developing feelings about self.
—explore some basic ways a young child copes with feelings.

The way you, as a leader, discuss and explore these points with the preteens in your group can help them gain new insights into themselves and others, distinguish different kinds of feelings, and cope with their emotions more effectively.

How can you build this kind of atmosphere? Preteens are only willing to recognize and explore their own feelings in an atmosphere of trust and respect. The group must accept them as they are! You, the group leader, must listen carefully and take their feelings seriously. By "listening" we mean more than being attentive to what they say, although that certainly means a lot. We also mean actively and verbally "reflecting" their own thoughts back to them, if you feel comfortable doing so. To help you learn to listen this way, we have provided some additional material on the steps involved in active listening in the resource section on page 43.

Part of the listening process involves helping your group members simply accept what another member says without judging it good or bad. For example, if one group member says she or he is "sad," another preteen may want to jump in with comfort before the member has finished explaining what makes him or her feel that way. As a leader, you can encourage group members to wait and hear the full story before replying.

If a young person expresses unpleasant feelings, sometimes we feel uncomfortable and overanxious to

help. But the person first needs to air these feelings. Respecting another's feelings means not judging too quickly what must be done about those feelings. It also means avoiding subtle ways of condemning a feeling as wrong or "bad."

Of course, there are times to reassure and help a person as well. After all, intense sadness or anger can make someone feel uncomfortable and in need of doing something to cope with the feeling.

If you think about it, the way we *feel* is one thing, and what we *do* about those feelings is another. For example, a young child might want to punch another child in the nose. The preteen observing this situation is then faced with two problems: listening to the angry child explain what's bothering her or him (that's the inner feeling) and helping the child refrain from punching the other child back (the external behavior). This difference between helping a person to recognize and accept a feeling without acting on it may be hard to get across to an older child. Therefore, the leader will, at times, be faced with the task of using common sense with preteens to emphasize the importance of both recognizing the young child's feelings, while also helping the young child cope with them.

Preteens from age 10 to 13 are growing both in their ability to understand another person's point of view and to give reasons for their own views. They can be challenged to consider another's feelings by careful listening, and to grow more used to communicating their feelings when talking about themselves. This experience can help them discover, at their own level, that the "heart has a logic which the mind does not know."

UNIT I
Feelings of a Young Child

Feelings color the child's world. As we watch little children, we notice how they see or hear and then respond. Children learn by seeing, hearing, tasting, smelling, and touching. But there is more than this to a child's world. Notice all the spontaneous things that a child does—laughing, crying, cooing, and crawling. Do you know how a child feels inside?

We see children from the outside. Most times if we are trying to be sensitive and pick up what children are feeling inside we are able to tell that they are happy from the smiles on their faces or sparkles in their eyes . . . frowns or changes in usual behavior may indicate that they are sad. But we also should be careful not to automatically assume a certain feeling in children too quickly. Children who appear okay to us may feel very low, while children who look bored may be bubbling over with mischief! What makes children feel happy or sad? Let's try to look inside and see. Or, better, let's look at how children (or we, ourselves, for that matter) express feelings in different ways.

Talk About It

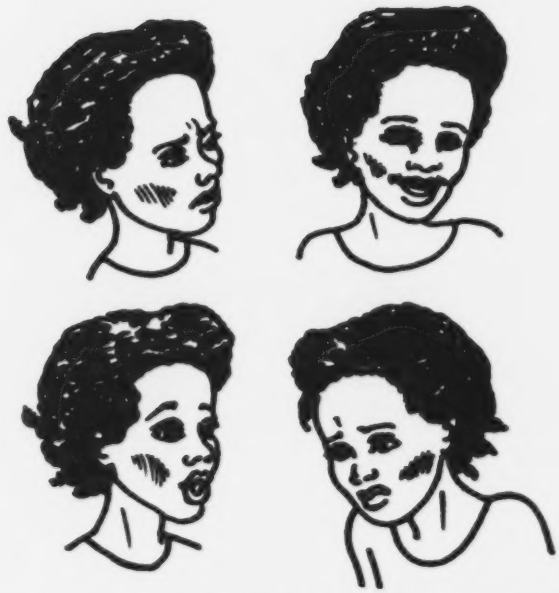
For this experience, you may want to divide a large group—it's up to you. Challenge the group to identify as many emotions as they can. Try to talk about all the people and things in a child's life that influence the way that child feels. The child's reactions to all of these people and things can soon become charged with feelings, whether pleasant or unpleasant, frightened or enthusiastic.

Discuss what causes an emotional reaction. When a child smiles at me, is it because of something I am doing to make the child happy? Or do I remind the child of someone else who made him or her happy? If, on the other hand, the child is frightened, is it because all strangers frighten this child and I am just another stranger, or am I actually doing something that frightens him or her?

Feelings arise for many reasons. Sometimes the way I act makes a child angry, or my smile makes the child happy. Yet often a child's feelings stem from inside.

The child may be upset because of cutting new teeth; or the child may be shy or easily frightened of any stranger.

The first step toward discovering why children react in a particular way is to recognize their feelings. Understanding children's feelings tells us much about their thoughts and actions and helps us appreciate what's going on in their world.



Do It

1. Many Feelings, One Event—Ask group members to list on sheets of paper five feelings that they consider "pleasant" and five they consider "unpleasant." (Avoid using the words "good" or "bad"; don't judge the worth or value of emotions.) Now encourage the group members to wonder what events cause these different feelings. The main purpose of this exercise is to help the group become more aware of different feelings and different emotional reactions. (The section on page 43 in the resource material may help you identify many of these emotions.)
2. Faces and Feelings—Encourage the preteens to "act out" some of the feelings that they identified above. This charade helps to show how people express feelings through facial expressions. If they seem interested, let them explain their "role playing" after they have acted it out.
3. An Expressive Voice—Have the group members divide into pairs. Each pair is to think about a real advantage and disadvantage of living in their town. One member of the pair presents the advantage, the other the disadvantage. After each pair has finished, ask the rest of the group to describe how each person feels about what was said. (Before starting, instruct the group members to listen carefully, not just to what the group members say, but to how they feel about what they are saying. Try to help the group pick out the feelings that are clearest and easiest to identify.)

Experiences To Share

Ask the group members to take a few minutes once or twice this week to play with a child and observe the feelings expressed by the child during play. Ask them to report to the group how many different feelings they recognized. Were the feelings pleasant or unpleasant? If they saw the child more than once, was the child's mood the same or different each time? Have the preteens comment on these questions and report how the child reacted to what they said.

Ask the group members to list as many feelings as they can and bring their lists to the next meeting. Before or during the meeting ask them to mark "U" after unpleasant feelings and "P" after pleasant feelings. (Not all feelings will be one or the other; some may be both at different times.) Ask them to compare lists and see whether there are differences in feelings and the way they have marked them.

Listening for and recognizing feelings can be difficult. Ask your group members to pick out one mealtime they spend with their families and see how many feelings their family members express during the meal. Then have them listen to see whether other family members seem aware of or react to these feelings. Discuss what difficulties they had while listening to others. How did the experience affect them personally? Do they feel other people listen to them?

Another possible project is to have the preteens watch a television drama. Ask them to observe carefully how a good actress or actor portrays different emotions. Are they able to pick up cues that are "signs" of various emotions (eye and facial expressions, tone of voice, and body position)? Do young children use similar cues to express their emotions, too?

Observation Sheet

CHECK THE UNIT FOCUSED ON DURING OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION SESSION

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____UNIT II - DEVELOPING AN UNDERSTANDING OF THE WORLD

____UNIT III - DEVELOPING RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY MEMBERS & OTHER PEOPLE

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____UNIT I - FEELINGS OF A YOUNG CHILD

____UNIT II - A YOUNG CHILD'S FEELINGS ABOUT SELF

____UNIT III - CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT OTHERS

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THE PRESCHOOLER WAS INVOLVED WITH ME____
THE PRESCHOOLER ACTED WITH AN ADULT____

WHILE I WAS WITH THE PRESCHOOLER

a) BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENED:

b) CHECK ONE: THE ACTIVITY WITH THE PRESCHOOLER WAS

____VERY GOOD
____OK - GOOD
____? DON'T KNOW ?
____NOT SO GOOD
____VERY BAD

c) CHECK ONE: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRESCHOOLER THOUGHT THE ACTIVITY WAS

____VERY GOOD
____OK - GOOD
____? DON'T KNOW ?
____NOT OK - BAD
____LOUSY

d) CHECK ONE: I LEARNED

____A GREAT DEAL
____SOME THINGS
____DON'T KNOW - CONFUSED
____VERY LITTLE
____ABSOLUTELY NOTHING

If you checked either "A GREAT DEAL" or "SOME THINGS" above, try to list briefly one or two things you learned about a preschooler.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION TWO:
A CHILD FEELS

UNIT II
A Young Child's Feelings About Self

UNIT II
A Young Child's Feelings About Self

Everyone has feelings, but each of us reacts differently to our emotions. Feelings affect the way we think about ourselves and the world. They influence our reactions to the things we do, the things that happen to us, and events that tie us to other people. These feelings can push or pull us in different directions. Sometimes they put us on a course we want to take; other times they throw us off-balance. Have you ever felt anxious or eager, enthusiastic or angry, needed or too smothered with affection? Children have these feelings, too!

Talk About It

A child's reactions to you give you clues about how he or she feels.

—"Some of my feelings make me feel OK."

—"Some of my feelings make me feel NOT OK." Children are so sensitive and easily affected that their feelings can throw them off-balance. Think about a child at bedtime—can you suggest some ways that children can be thrown off-balance so they don't want to go to bed? Encourage the group to explore those feelings that stem from the ambivalence a child feels between being very tired and wanting to stay awake.

If a child really feels OK it's less likely that emotions will throw the child off-balance. If that sense of self-worth exists, the pleasant feelings (like excitement) or the unpleasant (like frustration) are not as likely to push or pull the child into extremes.

When you think about it, don't children's feelings about being "OK" or "NOT OK" depend on the way people have treated them? We call the positive, encouraging ways of treating people "warm fuzzies," the negative, discouraging ways "cold pricklies." Can you think of some examples of "warm fuzzies" (a compliment on a job well done, a smile, a touch)? How about the "cold pricklies" (putting someone down, harsh criticism, ignoring them, not including them)?

Do It

1. At the group meeting give the members the opportunity to talk about "warm fuzzies" and "cold pricklies." Let them tell about some situations at school, home, club meetings, play or a combination of all three that:
   —make them feel OK about themselves (identify some "warm fuzzies").
   —make them feel NOT OK about themselves (identify some "cold pricklies").
   Be sure they tell about "warm fuzzies" as well as "cold pricklies."
2. Read to the group a well-known child's story or fairy tale, such as "The Ugly Duckling," "Cinderella," or "The Three Billy Goats Gruff." Ask the group to imagine that the chief hero or heroine in the story is a child, and while the story is being read, to identify the feelings that child has about himself or herself. Afterwards, have the group identify these feelings and discuss whether a little child could ever feel these ways.

Experiences To Share

Group members can help build a child's self-esteem in at least two ways:

1. Give children opportunities to do rewarding, satisfying tasks. For example, if children are helping you pick up toys and clean up after play, encourage them to do small, easily accomplished tasks. Encourage, but do not push. When a child succeeds at the task, say, "That job is well done," or "You've done a good job." Try not to say, "You are a good boy or girl," since this suggests that one is not okay unless he or she has *done* well. By praising the job instead of the child, you allow the child to feel satisfied.
2. Give the child free dividends of love. Do this at

a moment when no success or task is expected of the child. For example, as you are about to leave, you can give a child a hug and say, "I really enjoyed being with you," or "We had fun together." You may want to express love in a different way, a way more natural for you.

Ask the preteens if they can see how all of these examples are "warm fuzzies." We are trying to avoid as many of the negative "don't do's" as possible.

It is important to discuss the results of the preteens' efforts during the next meeting. Ask how they felt about giving "warm fuzzies." Some members will find children reacting favorably, but others may find a child fearful or mistrustful of praise and esteem. The latter is especially true of children who have been told by others in some way that they are NOT OK; in such cases encourage group members to be flexible and creative in handling the situation.

Observation Sheet

CHECK THE UNIT FOCUSED ON DURING OBSERVATION/PARTICIPATION SESSION

SECTION ONE - A CHILD GROWS

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____UNIT III - CHILDREN'S FEELINGS ABOUT OTHERS

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WHILE I WAS WITH THE PRESCHOOLER

a) BRIEF STATEMENT OF WHAT HAPPENED:

b) CHECK ONE: THE ACTIVITY WITH THE PRESCHOOLER WAS

____VERY GOOD
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____NOT SO GOOD
____VERY BAD

c) CHECK ONE: IT SEEMS TO ME THAT THE PRESCHOOLER THOUGHT THE ACTIVITY WAS

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d) CHECK ONE: I LEARNED

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If you checked either "A GREAT DEAL" or "SOME THINGS" above, try to list briefly one or two things you learned about a preschooler.

WHAT ARE CHILDREN LIKE?

SECTION TWO:
A CHILD FEELS

UNIT III
Children's Feelings About Others

UNIT III
Children's Feelings About Others

Have you ever felt so "down" that you were unable to bother about other people's problems? Or, have you ever felt so good that even getting a reprimand didn't matter? How we feel about ourselves affects the way we feel about others.

In the previous sections we have become aware of feelings and have seen how the way we feel can leave us feeling "OK" or "NOT OK" about ourselves.

Feelings pull us in many directions—up when we are happy; down when we are sad; in when we are anxious or concerned about "me"; out when we feel warm toward others. The push and pull of our feelings may frighten us, may make us feel we will do something we may regret. Then the problem becomes how to keep ourselves in balance and be considerate of others.

Talk About It

To help your preteen see how a person makes others feel, bring to the meeting one or two records or tapes of recently popular songs or a radio turned to a local station. Play the song for the group. As the music plays, ask the members to write down how the music makes them feel. Ask the members to tell you what kinds of feelings they had. (The record may make each person feel differently or the same.)

Talk about how we are like the music. How we "sound" or "feel" when we are with other people can bring out different feelings and actions in those people. Two people listening to the same person may react in different ways, just as two people listening to the same record may react differently.

It is important to help the preteens understand that this reaction to other people can influence the way people feel about themselves. By learning to deal with all kinds of feelings that pass between people, the preteens can help the preschoolers deal with their feelings and see how these "vibrations" influence the way people treat one another.

Let's look at one example of how our feelings affect each other. Ask one preteen to pretend to be an umpire who has just made a bad call. The other preteen is the batter, and it's the third strike, the last out of the big game. Now, ask the preteens to act out what they think they would do. Discuss with the group what feelings were expressed and how the feelings expressed by one person affected the other.

Do It

Here is a list of other "incidents" that you may wish your preteens to try in small groups.

1. Ask one group member to pretend to be a police officer writing a ticket for another group member who has just been caught speeding.
2. Ask one group member to pretend to be a parent who is scolding a child (another group member) for arriving late for dinner.
3. Ask one member to pretend to have an arm in a cast and the doctor has just said, "Your arm will have to be rebroken and reset."
4. Ask one group member to take the part of a friend telling a pal that a third friend will be awarded

high honors in scholastic performance for the year (or outstanding performance in musical talent).

5. In a group of older preteens have two members act out a situation between a parent and a preteen. The parent has just told the preteen that going to the school dance is out. The preteen has been looking forward to this dance for weeks and was under the impression that it was alright to go.
6. Ask one member to pretend to be a junior high school teacher telling a student that she or he is capable of doing much better in English composition.
7. Ask one member to pretend to be a horse. Another member is a rider who is leading the horse around and talking to it before a race.
8. Ask one member to give a sympathetic response to another member who is pretending to have hit his or her hand with a hammer.
9. Ask two members to act out a situation between a mother and a daughter. The mother is disappointed and criticizing or happy and praising the daughter for the dress the daughter has just made.

Ask each person involved to answer these questions at the end of the exercise.

1. What emotions did you feel?
2. How did your expression of your feelings affect the way the other person related to you?
3. If you were to do the exercise again, would you react differently and would this change what happened?

Experiences To Share

1. With a preschool friend find some magazine pictures of children interacting with other people. Ask the preschooler to tell you how the child feels. What made the child feel that way?
2. Between meetings, while you are watching TV, notice how one person's feelings affect another's actions. Jot down one of these incidents to discuss at the next meeting.
3. While in school, notice how the teacher's actions make various students feel. Ask yourself these questions:
   a. How does the way the teacher expresses feelings affect the way the students relate to that teacher?
   b. How do the students feel and how does their way of expressing feelings affect the teacher?

(Note to leader: Help the students explore alternatives to such feelings as: jealousy, fear, anger, etc. that they expressed in class.)

Perhaps some preteens would like to play the following version of the "IALAC" game. "IALAC" stands for "I Am Lovable and Capable." The game can be played either privately by one person or by a family or group. To play the game, participants need a sheet of paper, a pencil, and an understanding that human beings need to develop strong feelings that they are lovable and capable. Other people greatly affect a person's IALAC. If, for example, a mother says to her son, Robert, "You sure look a mess today," that remark hurts Robert's IALAC. Robert can represent his IALAC by writing his name and "IALAC" on a sheet of paper that he may keep either in his room if he is playing the game privately or in a family room where other family members also keep papers on which they have written their names and "IALAC." The family game might look like this:

Each time a person's IALAC is hurt (as, for instance, Robert's was hurt by his mother's remark), that person tears a little piece from his or her IALAC paper. Suppose, at the end of two days of playing the IALAC game, the papers look like this:

Someone in this family has a small, torn apart IALAC! Can you see who it is? What can other family members do now to help brother's IALAC grow back to its original size? Would any of the following help his IALAC?

—If Dad told him he had done a good job cleaning up his room?
—If his teacher congratulated him for doing a hard math problem?
—If his sister invited him to go on a bike ride?
—If his friend asked for help on an English project?

Probably all these things would help the boy's IALAC grow. IALACS grow when people: feel needed and loved; know others enjoy their company; feel they have done something well; hear others agree that they have done something well.

It might be fun for the preteens to make their IALAC signs at one meeting, take them home for a week, then bring them back for group discussion at the next meeting. If you do this, remind the preteens not only to tear off pieces when their IALAC is hurt, but to stick pieces back onto the paper when their IALAC feels good.

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Language Activities 42

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Door Openers 44

The Art of Listening 45

Coping With Feelings 47

Resource Material

The Ways Children Learn*

The Ways Children Learn is the first publication in a series of pamphlets entitled "Caring for Children." This series is new and would be a good addition to your professional library.

How is a child equipped to learn?

Senses: The senses of hearing, seeing, tasting, feeling and smelling. By using their senses, children learn what the objects and people around them are like.

Muscles: In order for children to feel completely at ease in the world, they must learn complex coordinated muscle skills which help them know more about their bodies and how they operate in space.

Curiosity: The push to learn—to poke, peer, push and pull at things in their environment is young children's way of finding out. To ask endless "why" questions of grownups is another way. To take apart and put together, to try and fail and try again—these are all ways children learn through curiosity.

Language: Language goes hand-in-hand with curiosity. As children discover things for themselves, they want to describe them, talk about them, ask questions about them. They want a name for each object they handle. They want to be able to tell other people what they do, how they feel, what they think.

Organizing Ability: As children grow, they store in their brains the stimuli they receive through their senses. A human being develops the ability to organize experiences into patterns that can be used over and over again in daily life. As their world broadens, children must often rearrange their map to cover a wider area and to include more experiences and to replace old patterns with new ones. This is the process of growing up.

How do children learn?

Exploration: This is the way children learn for themselves about the world. They explore it with all their senses.

Trial and Error: This is how adults as well as children must approach most new situations. When we approach a problem by trial and error, we learn that mistakes are a natural part of learning.

Pain: Pain is one of our most vivid experiences, because it jolts us into learning rapidly what is likely

to cause pain so that we avoid it in the future. Children may learn things that we do not want them to learn as a result of pain. Sometimes adults intentionally hurt a child to teach a lesson—and end up teaching the wrong thing. For example, when a teacher slaps a child for spitting, the child learns that spitting is wrong but slapping is all right because even the teacher does it.

Pleasure: When they are having fun, human beings want to repeat the actions that bring them pleasure. When learning is fun (or enjoyable), children naturally want to keep on learning. Smiles, conversations, and praise from adults are all rewards that spur children on to further learning.

Imitation: Young children learn by copying the behavior of grownups and of other children. Because imitation is such a strong urge in children, it is essential that young children be able to identify themselves with people whose standards are high and whose approach to life is worth copying.

Participation: This is the first cousin to learning by imitation. It means joining in the action.

Communication: We live in a world of words. They link us with our environment and give us means of sorting out the information we receive. The child who has few words to call upon is bewildered in a society that is so geared to language. Before beginning to enjoy all the thrills of learning, a child must first learn to communicate with the teacher and classmates.

What does a child need to know?

Trust in the world: Would you take the word of someone you didn't trust? Of course not. Neither will a child. A child who feels secure, however, is

*Adapted from Lois B. Murphy, Ph.D., and Ethel M. Leeper, *The Ways Children Learn*. U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, O.C.D. 1970. DHEW No. OCD 72-15.

ready to receive knowledge.

A child's own body: A person's own body is that person's most important possession. Learning the names of body parts, having many opportunities for vigorous use of muscles, and dancing give children assurance about their bodies and practice in controlling their movements.

Familiar objects: Children need many different experiences to make them familiar with objects around them; i.e., a big block is better at the bottom of a tower, you can't dig tunnels in dry sand, sugar is sweet and vinegar is sour. Such odd bits of knowledge are the stuff thinking is made of. The larger a child's stock of information, the more detailed a map of the environment and the clearer the child's thinking will be.

People: A wide knowledge of objects is useless if children do not understand their own relationship to people around them. They need to file away all sorts of information about what to call certain people, how to relate to others, and what is expected of each person in a relationship.

Time: While taking every opportunity to introduce the words and ideas of time, the adult must keep in mind that young children are just beginning to understand time. They may know "today" but are still confused that "tomorrow," when it comes, is also "today."

Realistic fear: Fear is born in us to alert us to danger. Sensible fear is nothing to be ashamed of and may be useful in protecting us from fires, cars, and other dangers. Children's fears often grow out of their limited experience. An adult can help children to handle fears by encouraging them to talk about their fears.

Handling anger: Anger is a natural emotion, too. Like fear, it needs to be controlled and directed. Adults need to help young children learn this control and direction.

Coping with frustration: Every child faces numerous frustrations in the course of a day. The child who understands the need for waiting, who willingly accepts substitutes, and who is able to do many interesting things is a child who has begun to cope with frustration.

Being responsible: Work that is appreciated becomes fun. Even the routine chores of life are bearable if the person has learned to approach responsibilities in a positive manner. The time to develop this attitude toward work is when children are young and naturally want to do grownup jobs.

How Do We Help in the Development of Language?

There are many things we can do to help the young child develop language skills. This list is only a few of the things which might be discussed. Ask your preteens for ideas.

Read to and with the child.

Help provide labels for things and people. Help with expansion of a child's sentence. When a child says to you, "Dog—eat," answer by saying, "Yes, the dog is eating his food."

Talk with and to the young child, but not *for* the young child.

Provide experiences that help develop language, such as labelling objects, singing songs, playing finger games, encouraging imaginative story-telling.

Help the child learn to listen by providing interesting things to hear.

Talk with children in the same way you talk with friends; use simple words, not baby talk.

Answer children's questions. Take time to listen carefully to what is being asked.

When children make "funny" mistakes in talking, to laugh at them may hurt their feelings.

Children learn to talk at their own rate of speed. Each child is an individual in how and when she/he learns to talk. We need to let children develop at their own rate.

Finger Plays and Action Rhymes

BALLS

Here's a ball,
(Thumb & index finger)
And here's a ball,
(2 thumbs & index fingers)
And a great big ball I see
(Arms over head in big ball)
Shall I count them?

Are You ready?

1 - 2 - 3

(Repeat balls)

TEAPOT

I'm a little teapot short and stout;
Here is my handle
Here is my spout
When I get all steamed up
This is what I shout,
"Just tip me over and pour me out."

FIVE LITTLE JACK-O-LANTERNS

(Hold up open left hand, palm to group. Beginning with little finger indicate each jack-o-lantern with index of right hand.)

Five little jack-o-lanterns
Sitting on the gate
The first one said,
"My, it's getting late!"
The second one said,
"Let's have some fun."
The third one said,
"Let's run, let's run!"
The fourth one said,
"Let's dance, let's prance!"
The fifth one said,
"Now's our chance."

Then O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O-O went the wind
and out went the light! (Say it mysteriously)
And away ran the jack-o-lanterns
Out into the night! (Fingers scamper away).

BEE HIVE

Here is the bee hive
Where are the bees?
Hidden away where nobody sees.
Soon they come creeping out of the hive.
One-Two-Three-Four-Five

(Right hand closed,
thumb inside,
place on left palm.
Hand opens one finger at a
time as child counts.)

TWO LITTLE APPLES

Away up high in the apple tree
Two little apples smiled at me.
I shook that tree as hard as I could,
And down came those apples,
UM-M-were they good!

(arms up)
(form apples with first finger and thumb of each hand)
(shaking with both hands)
(arms down)
(hands at stomach)

Other Suggestions:

WHERE IS THUMBKIN?
THIS OLD MAN
SEE MY FINGERS DANCE & PLAY
THIS IS THE WAY WE . . . .

Concept Activities

I. Activities to help a preschooler have fun doing or maybe learn something about similarities and differences.

A. Fabric Basket - Need two of each fabric texture, cut into squares and placed in a box. Present three sets with greatest texture differences. Mix the sets and ask child to match by feeling with fingers. Add more fabrics when ready. Perhaps the child will play the matching game blindfolded.

B. Rough and Smooth Boards - Need three boards 4″ x 8″ and five textures of sandpaper. On first board, glue 2 sandpaper squares, each 3″ x 3″, one being the roughest texture and second being the smoothest. On second board, alternate five roughest and smoothest textures, each cut 3″ x 1″. On third board, start with roughest texture and proceed to smoothest, using all five textures. Pieces are 3″ x 1″. Show child how to feel board from top to bottom touching lightly. Use blindfold.

C. Lotto - Can use pictures, magazines, etc. Place on one board a variety of items. Have a matching item for each one on the board. Show child how to match items. (This game is like Bingo but it uses pictures instead of numerals.)

D. Combination Card Games - Cut out pictures of items that go together, such as cup and saucer, sock and shoe. Show child how to match items.

E. Sound Bottles - Use plastic pill or film cylinders or baby food jars. Fill with a variety of items: peas, rice, salt, macaroni, pebbles. Can make pairs of sounds by filling two containers with the same item. Place contact paper of one color on one of the cylinders and a second colored paper on the second cylinder. Use three period lesson. Have child match sounds.

F. Smell Bottles - Same procedure as sound bottles but use a variety of smells. For bottles containing liquid, first place cotton in the container and then pour liquid on the cotton.

G. Rhyming - Word Games - Start by saying many words that sound alike and then have the children add as they understand the game. Use all English words, then vary it by making up words with the same sounds.

H. Sound Hunt - Go on a hunt for all things that make a noise. Or you can use equipment with sounds and have the child guess what the sound is.

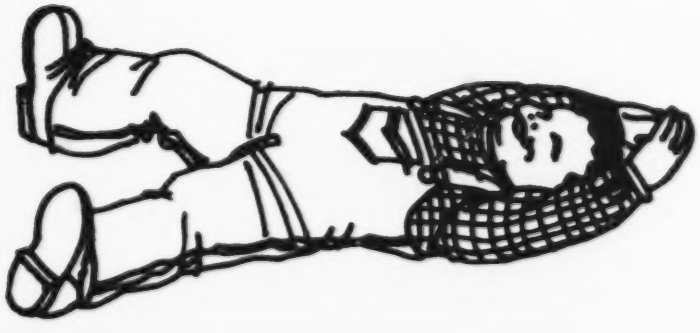
I. "Can You Guess?" Box - Use shoe box. Cut hole in top. Put in a variety of items. Ask the child to put in one hand and feel for one object, then say what it is without looking.

II. Activities to help a preschooler get ready for reading and writing.

A. Treasure Hunt Walk - Paste or draw objects on cards a child is to find outside, and then let her/him hunt outside for the objects.

B. Drawing Games - Use chalk and board and crayon and paper. Place a dot on the board and ask the child to place the chalk on the dot. Then you make another dot and the child draws to it. Continue placing dots with child being encouraged to draw straight lines to them, keeping the chalk on the board. (This game may be hard for children younger than four.)

C. Angels in the Snow - Have the child lie flat on back on floor or carpet, arms at side, feet together. Move feet apart, keeping knees stiff, then back together. Move arms along floor until they meet over head, keeping elbows stiff. Clap hands at top. Return arms to side. Can do arms and legs together, left side only, right side only, etc.



D. Walking Board - Use 2" x 4" piece of wood about 8 feet long. A holder can be made for the ends. See if the child can walk from one end to the other. Then suggest turning around on boards, walking backwards, sidewards, etc.

III. Activities to help a preschooler understand numbers and space.

A. Blocks - Collect scraps of wood, cut them to size, sand and wax.* Show child how one long block equals two shorter blocks, etc., how one tall block is as high as three shorter blocks stacked.

B. Counting Songs and Books - Many good ones can be found at local public libraries.

C. Measuring Tapes - Measure how tall a child is, how big his waist is, etc. OR point out his age in inches, approximate age of any given adult, and perhaps a grandparent's age.

D. Measuring Cups and Spoons - Let child fill with water, pour. Show the child how to fill a cup using two ½ cup measures, etc.

E. Nesting Toys - Use cans of graduated size and paint or cover with contact paper. Build with them and show how smaller ones all disappear inside the biggest one.

*Standard blocks are multiples of a basic 6-inch unit.

Language Activities

1. First Reading Books - From magazines, cut large, colorful pictures of objects, animals and people that are part of the child's world. Paste on cardboard and, if possible, cover with clear self-sticking plastic. Punch holes on left side and string the pages together or use metal rings to keep pages together.
2. Texture Books - for children who like to touch things as one way to explore their world. Paste a variety of fabrics in a scrapbook. You may include items from a workshop area such as sandpaper and thin wood, paper products such as curled ribbon and bumpy cardboard, and household items like a sponge and pot scraper.
   Write a descriptive or naming word under each item. Let the children feel item from top to bottom as you read the book with them.
3. Cloth Books - Choose a theme for the book. Cut shapes, colors, textures, people, animals or toys from fabric. Prepare the cloth pages by cutting 12" x 16" rectangles of heavy fabric such as canvas. Then embroider or machine sew the items onto the cloth pages. Sew a seam down the middle of the pages to bind the book together.
4. Felt Boards and Story Characters - Prepare to tell a story with felt characters. Have felt characters cut out. Hand them out to the children in your group. As a specific character is named in your story the child holding it brings it up to and places it on the felt board.

5. Hand Puppets - Use old socks. Show the child how to form mouth by opening thumb away from other four fingers, then closing thumb to other fingers. Sew on buttons for eyes and other fabric pieces for remaining parts of face.
6. Finger Puppets - Scout stores for finger puppets in punch-out books. Or make your own. Or, using a washable felt pen, draw a face on one of the child's fingers.
7. Books Children Make - Show a child a magazine and ask her/him to tell you which pictures she/he wants for her/his book. If the child uses scissors, she/he may cut the pictures; if not, you may. The child pastes the pictures on colored paper. As she/he tells you about the picture, you write down her/his words. Make a cover using the child's' name for the title. For instance, "Kathy's Book." Write "The end" on the back cover. String pages together after punching holes on left side and reinforcing holes with reinforcement.

Some Helps in Reading Books and Telling Stories to Young Children*

1. Select a book or story that you particularly enjoy and your enthusiasm will be relayed to the children.
2. Hold the book in such a way that *all* the children can see the pictures *all* the time. This means story groups need to be kept small.
3. The younger the child, the smaller the story group should be. Young children are very egocentric and want you to answer *their* questions immediately but have little or no interest in the questions of other children. Thus, large story groups become bedlam as everyone asks questions at once.
4. Read slowly and project your voice so the children can understand you. If you can face the children most of the time you will retain their interest and they will be able to hear you better. To do this may mean almost memorizing the text. If you are telling a story rather than reading a book you may want a notecard or two in your lap.

*Prepared by Marilyn Blossom, Extension Child Development Specialist, University of Missouri.

5. You may want some props for your story such as caps for the story "Caps for Sale" or a real animal for an animal story. If the story is not extremely familiar to the children it would be best to introduce and talk about your props either before or after the story.
6. Don't be afraid to "ham it up" a bit. Children love dramatics. Watch them telling a story—their eyes roll around, elaborate gestures are made, sometimes with the whole body, their voice gets louder and louder as the action gets wilder . . . Adults tend to be too stiff and self conscious for fear of making a fool of themselves. An expressive story teller holds a child's attention much longer and has far fewer discipline problems than the person who speaks in a monotone.
7. If some children are not paying attention to the story you may be able to solicit their interest by directing a question to them. "Timmy, does your farm have a big red barn like this picture?" If few children are paying attention you may:
   a. have been expecting them to sit still too long.
   b. have selected a book that doesn't interest them.
   c. have little enthusiasm for what you are doing which is quickly relayed to the children.
   d. be reading or speaking with little or no expression which makes boring listening.
   e. be holding the book at an angle so all the children can't see.
   f. have too many children in your story group.
8. One of the most important things you can convey to a small child is a love for books. They must depend on you to select what is good so careful thought and planning must go into the selection and reading of children's books.

A Guide For "Understanding Children's Feelings"*

Understanding and coping with feelings is an art not only with children, but with people of all ages. Because the young child's feelings toward himself or herself are only beginning to take shape, there is a special reason for "coping with care" when trying to understand children's feelings. Yet this can be true of the very old and in-between as well as the very young.

Leaders will find this unit personally interesting. Therefore, in order to assist leaders in learning to recognize feelings with care in working with a group, we have provided some additional materials on "active listening," or what is also called "reflective listening." Active listening means "listening out loud to the other person." It involves more than paying careful attention or hearing what the person says. Active listening involves an attentiveness that encourages the person to "open up" or say more. It also means giving back what has been heard in a way that allows a person to hear what he or she has said.

The first step in listening for feelings is to encourage the person to open up. The second step is to use a form of listening that allows the person a chance to "hear himself think" or "get the feel of herself," and to hear "how he's coming across." This step may go so far as to allow the person to forget herself long enough to roam freely over the field of his or her concerns. The third step is to join the person with help in coping with his or her feelings and concerns. We have included some material on all three steps.

*Prepared by John M. Williams, Assistant Family Life Specialist, The Pennsylvania State University in Cooperation with Ruth Von Gustedt, Family Life Specialist, West Virginia University.

Door Openers

Listening is not passive. A person who hears someone, but does not listen to them may look bored, or uninterested. A person who listens is attentive. She/he may lean forward or not, and her eyes express interest in what the other person is saying. A person who listens communicates interest.

Listening is active. A listener is involved in the conversation not only with a look of attention, but usually with all kinds of "listening comments." The listener begins with some sort of word that lets the other person know she/he wants to listen. The following are some examples that are often spoken of as keys to open conversations. They are invitations to say more, share ideas, opinions and feelings. You may want to try some of those that you have not used. If so, be sure to choose those which "fit" your conversational style. One of the most important qualities in listening is to feel comfortable at it—to feel relaxed. Being yourself or being genuine is itself an important beginning to conversation.

"I see."
"You did, huh?"
"Oh."
"Is that so?"
"Mm hmmm."
"Tell me about it."
"How about that."
"Tell me more."
"Interesting."
"I'd be interested in your point of view."
"Sounds like you've got something to say about this."
"Let's discuss it."

"Shoot, I'm listening."
"Tell me the whole story."
"I'd like to hear about it."
"Would you like to talk about it?"
"Let's hear what you have to say."
"This seems like something important to you."
"Would you elaborate on that idea just a little more? I want to be sure I understand your thinking fully."
"Really?"
"You don't say."
"No fooling."

These door opening invitations convey your acceptance and respect* for the other person. It tells that you are really listening, that you have heard what is being said.

Try to avoid over-working any one or a few of these repetitiously, but try to use them all, and add other similar door-openers of your own. You might even consider copying these onto a 3 x 5 card that can be carried in pocket or purse until you "own" them mentally.

*Remember that *accepting* and *respecting* the person for whom you hold no particular liking does not mean that you would adopt or even condone all of that person's acts or behavior. Rather, it means that you see them as they really are, that you accept that they hold views of their own, and that you feel no compulsion to change them. Show deference for their feelings and opinions that do not attack you or what is yours, if you disagree. After all, the party or family reunion won't last long. Who knows, you may even discover you like the person or some of her/his ideas, in spite of her/his idiosyncrasies.

The Art of Listening

It's no news to anyone that much of what passes under the name of "music" is cheap or dull. We can grow to like dull music, or at least to accept it because it is so common; but "liking it" will not help such music to move us to new depths of feeling.

The same is true of conversation. Conversation is an art; but much of this art may be poorly or sloppily done. We grow used to sloppy listening because it is so common; but getting used to such low level listening does not mean that it is adequate to meet the real needs of people, or to move them to open themselves up to another person. Like beautiful music, or the silence of a beautiful forest, good listening can bring out the best in other persons. Yet listening is more than an art; it is the lifeline of all inter-personal relationships, including the helping relationship.

But what is effective listening? Any kind of listening that is well done has certain fundamental qualities. One of these is acceptance. How much the listener cares is a basic; and how much a listener values a person comes through in his or her attentiveness, interest, and manner of sitting. It comes through in the warmth and concern a person's voice conveys.

Yet acceptance, or the conveying of a message that the listener prizes or is concerned about, is not the same as agreement. In fact, disciplined listening involves accepting the speaker, and sometimes rejecting his message or differing with its meaning. Of course, acceptance is always a risk! Giving acceptance inevitably involves the listener in making clear the difference between his acceptance and his agreement.

Understanding is equally basic. Understanding is first the ability to take another person's point of view. It is the ability to experience what another person feels as if the feeling were one's own. It is the ability to "feel with" another about something, and then to echo back these feelings. Listening with empathy, then, involves more than understanding the other well. It means carefully "giving back" the other's feelings to her, or being a living mirror.

However, to empathize is not to sympathize. To give empathy is to walk in the other person's tracks; to give sympathy is to hold his hand. Empathy involves "giving back" the other's feelings, while holding on to one's own; sympathy involves sharing one's own feelings, or giving them as support. Knowing the difference involves being clear which feelings are which, and clear about what is given.

Effective listening means also that the listener is genuine with the speaker. He "gives back" what he hears as openly and directly as possible. Genuineness gives the speaker confidence that the feedback she receives is real, and confidence in the listener. It helps make what he hears back clear.

But if these are the qualities of effective listening, why aren't there more effective listeners around? After all, who could be against qualities like these? The answer to this question lies in a general characteristic of our American way of life—speed! Speed works well for some things; but not for listening. Listening takes

time, patience, and care.

Our listening is more like that of the hurried traveler. "May I help you? Yes, just tell me what your problem is and I'll tell you what you can do." This often-used approach is called the "problem-solving" approach. The speaker has a problem to solve, and he wants the listener's help in solving it. Usually, the listener takes the lead by "extracting" information about the problem—and listening carefully as the speaker gives the requested information. Then he alternates with the speaker in listing or suggesting different solutions, and gives advice or information. This approach is quite helpful as a simple listening approach. However, if the wrong questions are asked, the speaker is easily distracted from his or her own trend of thought. Or else, he or she is distracted from openly expressing feelings.

In short, question asking is a sort of listening "within limits." It can be effective for gaining information; but it's much less effective when communication moves into the "deeper water" of feelings, values, and relationships.

To pull out of our usual habits of listening and to break away from a "problem-solving" approach is a tremendous challenge. It takes months of practice and years of patience. A few hours training will break the old habits; but it takes much longer to become sharpened and seasoned enough to move beyond obvious feelings and to catch the more important things people are saying. This is "reading between the lines" for the fuller message the person speaks. More than practice or patience, what listening requires is the desire to learn. That means more than anything.

But what approach to listening can a person take to listen well? The approach has been given different names because different *abilities* are emphasized. The most popular name is *"reflective* listening" since the first skill it requires is a restatement of the speaker's feelings, or a *reflection of feelings.* A listener can reflect the speaker by re-stating in other words the feeling which most captures the speaker's mood, such as: "Wow, that was quite a let-down for you!" The listener can also restate the speaker's words in order to make more clear a feeling that is expressed. For example: *Speaker:* "Sometimes I seem to be asking her to show me even more than I should need to show that she is interested." *Listener:* "As if to say to her, 'Please like me!' " *Speaker:* "Yes!"

Another name given to this kind of listening is *active* listening because the listener is actively engaged in helping the person express himself. The emphasis in this ability is still upon recognizing and reflecting the person's feelings, but now the listener carefully picks out the most important feelings and focuses on these. This can be frustrating for a while. If the listener says, "You feel angry because you didn't make the team," the person may reply, "No, I'm not angry; I'm hurt." But if the listener stays with the person, she will eventually hit feelings which encourage the person to go on. For instance, the person will say, "You bet I'm angry! I wish I could give that coach a piece of my mind." Then he will go on to explore the subject further. And the listener will help by giving more furthering responses.

A final name which is given this approach to listening is called *empathic* responding, because the listener is trying to understand fully what the person is saying. The emphasis here is still upon reflecting feelings and focusing upon important feelings, but the ability involves a fuller understanding of how what a person says fits together. The listener focuses, not simply on the feelings, but on the meanings that are connected to the feelings in order to make clear why the person feels as she does. For example, "You feel angry at the coach 'because' he didn't recognize your talent." Or, the listener focuses upon the person(s) at whom the feelings are directed. For example, "You are angry at the coach, but also at me because as his assistant, I didn't recognize your talents either." Or the listener may focus on the interpersonal message which the person intends. For example, a listener may say, "You are not angry just to let off steam. You want me to

persuade the coach to put you on the team."

After a listener learns these abilities well, she may spend long periods of time actively listening, or long periods of time in silence; but the silence is not the same as before. Now the listener, whether silent or responding, is alert to catch exactly and accurately what the person is saying, to catch the feelings, as well as the meanings, to listen between the lines—without jumping to conclusions—for what is being suggested instead of stated, and to listen for fuller, rather than partial understanding.

Coping With Feelings

Coping with another's feelings, including a child's, can be a challenging effort. Often when we are engaged in this effort, we are "under fire." As leaders or parents, we may not stop to think about the tactics we employ, or which kinds of efforts seem to help most.

One of the strategies for helping someone cope with feelings is that of *giving feedback*. Giving feedback involves sharing our own impressions or feelings about the subject of a person's concern. If a child feels frustrated and says, "I can't get this thread through this needle," a helper might reply, "That's very difficult to do. I was surprised you did it so quickly before. Do you need help?"

Another strategy involves giving *reassurance*. A helper might say to the same child, "That is very frustrating when the thread won't go through, isn't it?"

When a child is so overwhelmed by feelings such as fear or anger, sometimes another's *command* can help him to balance the intensity of feelings against the impulse to do something he would regret, or something that would harm another. For example: "Robert, I know you are very angry; but go stand over there while I talk with Jon about what he's done to you!"

Sometimes when a child or another person is immersed in feelings, such as feelings of anxiety which leave her uncertain, the *giving of advice* may help to cope with feelings. For example: "I know that burn hurts a lot; it must be extremely painful. Keep it under the cold water for a bit longer."

Disagreement is sometimes helpful in encouraging a person to weigh reasons, even though he is under pressure of strong emotions. For example: "You may be angry; but I wouldn't say anything to him right now if I were you. I'd give myself a chance to think about the matter first."

Giving *praise or compliments* can be a way of helping a person to cope with feelings such as lack of confidence in attempting something new. "That was well done, Alice. You dried those dishes very quickly." Or, "I'm proud of you for waiting here and trusting that I'd still be back."

There are other important ways of helping others to cope with their feelings while solving problems or making decisions on their own or otherwise. What others, besides these, would you include?

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